Cynthia White —Pest

By VINCENT G. PERRY

With a quick jerk Horace Sangster pulled his line from the water, and then cried out with disgust. The fish, if there had been one, had got away. Three hours without a catch—it was enough to annoy a man with normal nerves, and Horace was far from that. He drew in his line angrily and attempted to wind it up, but something had gone wrong with his reel. That was the last straw. He sat down on a rock and swore.

The sound of the word startled him. He had not sworn for years. His nerves were certainly making a wreck of him. The solitude of the place was aggravating him, too. They had told him the simple camp life, with lots of fishing, would make a new man of him. Such bosh! Why, there was hardly a thing about it that did not make him feel worse.

This was the second day, and he was going to make it his last. To begin with, he had had trouble pitching his tent. The storm in the night had kept him up keeping out the rain. Every crack of the bushes or sound of the birds in the trees caused him to start uneasily. It was nearly as nerve-racking as an afternoon session with the fourth-year class. The thought of the fourth-year girls irritated him the more. They had been the cause of his breakdown, he felt confident. For months he had looked with dread on the hour each afternoon that he was forced to teach them mathematics. They were just silly, thoughtless girls, and would not have been so hard to put up with had it not been for their ringleader, Cynthia White.

Without exaggeration Cynthia was the worst girl he had ever had under his tuition. Her main object in life seemed to be to torment the professor of mathematics. Something always turned up for her to argue about or laugh over. There was always something for her to ridicule, and she never missed an opportunity to make him feel mean—perhaps because she was so large and he was so small.

As he sat there thinking it over, Horace made up his mind he had been foolish. It would have been easy to have arranged for his dismissal from the college. Why hadn't he done it? There was something he liked about Cynthia, in spite of everything. The spirit of fun behind those twinkling black eyes of hers appealed to him, and the warmth of her laugh made him long for something—something that was not in his life.

Suddenly the laugh sounded close beside him. He nearly toppled into the water from the shock it gave him. He turned quickly to confront Cynthia, a little way off, her eyes bulging over with merriment. After rubbing his eyes to make sure he was seeing aright, Horace smiled forth a greeting. Even the pest of his life was welcome in that solitude.

"Oh, Mr. Sangster, you look so funny there," she laughed. "If the girls could only see you in your bare feet!"

"Heavens!" Horace tried to hide his feet behind a log. He had forgotten he had taken off his shoes and socks to wade a creek.

"Don't be alarmed," she smiled encouragingly, "I am going to take off my shoes, too. One can't fish well with shoes on. How do you like my costume?"

She was clad in khaki from head to foot, and her hair was hanging in curls over her shoulders. He had never realized how beautiful she was before.

"Jove! You look peachy," he murmured, admiringly, not realizing that he had used the word "peachy" for the first time since he had got his degree.

That encouraged Cynthia to take a seat beside him. Not that she needed encouragement, for she would have sat there sooner or later. It did not take Horace long to forget that he was a college professor and she was a mere student. Soon they were chatting gayly.

Her home was near by and she had spent every summer fishing in that stream for years. She led him to a place where he was "sure to catch something, no matter how poor an angler he was." When his luck remained poor and he still made vain attempts to land a trout, Cynthia did not fail to laugh at him and assure him that he was as funny as he could be.

Somehow it did not bother him to be laughed at one there. The air seemed to have got into his blood and given him a sense of humor that responded to her witty ridicule. He was not long in catching onto the right way to draw in the line, and before the afternoon was over he was catching as many trout as Cynthia. When they parted he had gained her promise to search him out the next day.

Camping agreed with him after that. Fishing was the most wonderful sport in the world when one had a companion like Cynthia, he decided after two weeks of glorious days. Nerves? Why, he had forgotten he had such things!

They would have still stayed out of his mind had it not been that a rainy day broke in on them. It made it necessary to stay in his tent and try and spend the day reading, wondering all the while what Cynthia was doing. Making fun of him, most likely—the thought came to him quickly and left him staggering. Perhaps she was. Perhaps she had spent all those days with him just to have something to tell the fourth-year girls when she went back to college. He would have to resign.

It would be just like Cynthia to do it—but would it? This new Cynthia was not a bit like the old Cynthia who had made his life miserable. But as the rain kept up his mind became more unsettled, and before the night was over he had made up his mind that Cynthia had been making a fool of him.

The next day he still thought it. When Cynthia appeared he hardly spoke. She saw at once her presence was not welcome. With a toss of her head she started up the bank and forded the stream some way up. After fishing alone for some time Horace realized that he had been a cad. Cynthia was too fine a girl to be insulted like that. He would find her and make amends. He started in the direction she had taken and attempted to ford the stream where he imagined she had crossed. The spot he chose appeared quite shallow from the bank, but as he reached the center, he stepped into a deep hole and sank out of sight.

Cynthia looked up just in time and with a cry jumped into the water and made for the spot. When he came up for the first time she was there to clutch him and a couple of strokes took them to safety. His body remained limp in her grasp, and as she dragged him over to the bank and placed him on the grass, the pallor of his cheeks alarmed her. He lay quite still. She placed her ears to his breast and then cried out with fright, "He's dead!" Madly she tried to shake him back to life, and then she seemed to lose her senses.

"Come back, Horace!" she cried. "Oh, Horace, don't die. There is so much I want to ask forgiveness for. I was just beginning to know you and like you, Horace—like you so much, Horace. Please open your eyes. I have been such a wretch to tease you. Oh, dearest Horace, open your eyes!"

And Horace did. He could not sham any longer after being called "dearest Horace."

Cynthia's hysteria vanished when she discovered he was alive. She was very angry at first when he confessed he had not been hurt at all and was conscious all the time, but her sense of humor came to the rescue and she joined in his laugh.

"Please call me dearest Horace again," he said as he reached out for her hand. But Cynthia would not until he had told her how much he loved her and how miserable he would be without her.

"Dear old pest," he said just before the kiss that sealed their engagement.

JULIA WARD HOWE'S SALON

As Hostess It Was Said of Her With Truth That She Delighted in Contrasts.

When I think of it I believe that I had a salon once upon a time. I did not call it so, nor even think of it as such; yet within it were gathered people who represented many and various aspects of life. They were genuine people, not lay figures distinguished by names and clothes. The earnest humanitarian interests of my husband brought to our home a number of persons interested in reform, education and progress. It was my part to mix in with this graver element as much of social grace and geniality as I was able to gather about me. I was never afraid to bring together persons who rarely met elsewhere than at my house, confronting Theodore Parker with some archpriest of the old orthodoxy, or William Lloyd Garrison with a decade, perhaps, of Beacon street dames. A friend said, on one of these occasions: "Our hostess delights in contrasts." I confess that I did; but I think that my greatest pleasure was in the lessons of human compatibility which I learned in this wise. I started, indeed, with the conviction that thought and character are the foremost values in society, and was not afraid or ashamed to offer these to my guests, with or without the stamp of fashion and position.—Julia Ward Howe.

Not Slaves to Precedent.

Were one to analyze the careers of 200 or 300 of our leading men of finance and industry it would probably develop that not half of them continued in the line of business in which they started, but struck boldly out in the direction where they saw the biggest opportunities and where their inclination lay.

One of the earliest and most notable instances of this was Commodore Vanderbilt, who was so old before he turned to railroading that his family and his advisers importuned him to let well enough alone and not to enter an entirely new field at his time of life.

This readiness of brainy giants to take up new things and to throw their whole selves into them is really one of the principal reasons why the United States has led the world in so many lines of endeavor. Wealthy Europeans, as a rule, avoid the new, avoid untried paths; they are inclined to worship precedent.

In the Cradle of the Deep.

A few men were put into the barracks of an older company at Great Lakes. One of these boys snored so loudly that the next day the boys planned to get even. That night when his snoring commenced one boy got on each end of the hammock and began to raise and lower it. The boy woke up much dazed, screamed: "Oh, ma, I wish I'd taken your advice and not gone into the army. I didn't know I'd get so seasick!"

WHAT CAN WE DO?

Dr. Henry N. MacCracken, the president of Vassar college, has been devoting himself to the upbuilding of the Junior Red Cross, which has grown, within a year, from nothing to a membership of over 8,000,000. Under the inspiration of his leadership, with war work as a motive, the accomplishment of school children all over the country has been amazing. They have turned out garments for soldiers and refugees—quilts, comforters, rugs, knitted clothing, furniture, toys. They have gathered thousands of dollars worth of salvage, in tin cans and tinfoil, and garnered vegetables contributed for the maintenance of markets. In fact, Doctor MacCracken says: "The Junior Red Cross today finds itself engaged in doing almost as many things as there are miles between the Atlantic and the Pacific, but always with one object—national service."

"National Service"—what an ennobling idea to constantly cultivate in the minds of the young! For this one reason alone every parent should do more than encourage the activities of the Junior Red Cross. The idea of service takes patriotism for granted, and instills its best part all the time in the minds of children. But the work the school children have done has been beneficial in other ways, and moreover the young people are intensely interested by it. Thoughtful and practical men complain that courses of study in the public schools are too detached from the everyday business of living. Here is where the work of the Junior Red Cross will help out. The sewing, knitting, cooking, rug-making, toy and furniture making are all as practical as brushing one's teeth. The children learn that their work must be up to the Red Cross standards, in order to be accepted, and they become painstaking. Their resourcefulness and ingenuity are stimulated and in their efforts to raise money have revealed their enterprise and thrift. Parents know that all these are the things that make for success and happiness. We know the patriotism may be taken for granted, that it lies in the hearts of nearly all Americans, but the war has seen it translated into service—to the great benefit of the children. Let us hope that the activities of the Junior Red Cross will be kept up after the war is over.

Fringe has invaded the precinct of sweaters. Often it is found on the sides of the large sailor collar, and is made of the same wool as the sweater or wool of contrasting color. One silk sweater that can be made by any clever knitter has black and white fringe all around a large shawl collar, around the bottom of the sweater and around the lower edge of the cuffs. Tassels, which are only a short concentrated bit of fringe, are used frequently at the ends of sashes on the new sweaters, or they are placed at the corners of the sailor collar to hold the points in place and to add an interesting decorative touch.

Garments Close Reefed.

While the straight silhouette is the dominant one of the season, not all frocks are cut on straight chemiselike lines. The tendency is toward garments suited to the various types of figure, but keep all close reefed. The straight line, chemise type of garment is shown, dresses with coatee and jacket effects are popular and draperies also appear with great frequence, but flare is definitely absent from each and all.

Negligees for Leisure Hours

A little excursion into the realm of negligees soon convinces one that the variety in them is almost as great as that in afternoon gowns. They range from the simplest affairs to those that challenge study by their intricate draperies and their lovely color effects, as well as by all sorts of fanciful, carefully made little embellishments. Negligees are among the increasing number of things that have ceased to be luxuries and have grown to be necessities in the lives of women of cultivated taste. The busy woman of today must allow herself a little leisure in the course of strenuous days and weeks and when that leisure comes she likes to "dress the part."

Above there is a picture of one of the most unpretentious of these picturesque garments. It consists of a straight chemise dress of pink crepe de chine, suspended from a band of ribbon. The crepe de chine is box-plaited from top to bottom, with the machine-made plaits pressed in to make them permanent and is a light rose pink in color. Over this there is a coat of crepe georgette in the same color. It has elbow sleeves with a dainty lace flowing from their edges and lace at the bottom. A quilling of the georgette makes the best of finishes for the neck and front of the coat. The lace is a fine cream-colored variety that has a way of falling in graceful lines.

A negligee of this kind is in the right company when a frivolous cap and light slippers are worn with it. In caps again we find assortments varied and as numerous as the minutes of the day. Nets, laces, georgette crepe, ribbons and little hand-made chiffon flowers are the airy and alluring things these bewitching headpieces are made out of. For slippers satins and ribbons are relied upon and there is no dearth of variety in them. All these pretty and exquisite things suggest themselves as delightful gifts for the holidays.

Julia Bottomley

Practical Serge Dresses.

Practical dresses of blue serge, many on semiprincess lines, are a feature of fall fashions; these models are only semitailored in appearance and are effectively trimmed with rather brilliant colored embroidery, some in wool and others in wool and silk combinations. Chenille is also used, and many of the motifs applied to these dresses are of the floral design.

90 Per Cent of Girls Workers.

More than 90 per cent of the employees of a Wilkesbarre (Pa.) plant are girls, it is announced. Recent investigations by the department of labor showed generally a high increase in the percentage of women employed in industrial plants during the last few years.

HAPPY IN POVERTY

Stern Pride That Is a Part of the Japanese Character.

Educator's Pathetic Story of Mother's Self-Denial and Son's Appreciation —Offer of Aid Most Gracefully Put Aside.

A Japanese educator tells the story of brothers in the agricultural college of Sapporo, in the northern island of Hokkaido. One day one of these boys appeared wearing a woman's yellow and black striped padded coat, with a velvet neckband, showing that the garment was ordinarily worn to support a baby carried Japanese fashion on the back. There was much tittering among the other students at this strange garb and the instructors found their classes somewhat demoralized. At noon the young man was called into the faculty room for an explanation. His father was dead; his mother made a bare subsistence out of a small farm; she had managed to save enough to send her boys to school with clothes for the summer season, and nothing more. When winter came the mother wrote that in vain she had tried to save enough extra money to buy them the necessary winter kimono; that in spite of every economy she had been unable to manage it—such was the story.

"So I am sending you my own kimono and coat," she wrote. "You must have your thin cotton ones washed and mended, though I know they must be nearly worn out by this time. Wear my heavy kimono," the boy went on. "When I can I will send you some money to buy new ones."

"But though I have mended my old kimono," the boy went on, "it is too ragged. There was only one thing to do—wear this one on the outside."

He was asked why at least he had not removed the telltale black velvet band.

"Last night," he replied, "I took the scissors and began to rip, but suddenly I remembered how my mother's hands had sewed those stitches, and how she had taken off her warm coat to send me, and how she was always working for us and thinking of us here, lonely for the sight of our faces, and I could not rip out the stitches of my mother's hands. I am sorry, sensei, but I had to wear it as it was."

Those same boys were later invited to live free of expense in a small dormitory donated by an American lady, Gertrude Emerson writes in Asia Magazine. The younger boy came to thank her, but to explain that acceptance would be out of the question.

"My brother is very proud," he said. "Besides, you do not understand. It is true that the paper shutters are torn and that sometimes it is cold, but we like our poor room. It is true that our lamp is small and the light is dim, but we study very well that way. It is for our education that we suffer. We are quite happy."

Strange Power of Metals.

The importance of the remarkable surface actions that distinguish metals generally was noted in a lecture by Sir William Tilden at the British scientific products exhibition. The property of platinum of causing the combination of oxygen gas with hydrogen and other combustible substances was discovered by Davy just 100 years ago, but other metals show still stranger powers. One of the most valuable is the power possessed by nickel of causing hydrogen to combine with heated oil, converting it into a fat that is solid when cold. A substance acting by its mere presence in this way is termed a catalyst, and catalytic actions are now turned to account on a large scale in making sulphuric and nitric acids and ammonia, in the surface combustion of gas, in obtaining fats from whale oil and in a variety of manufacturing processes. A great field is open in the study of catalytic effects.

English-Grown Belladonna.

Belladonna, which before the war came almost exclusively from Germany, is now being cultivated at Dorking on a scale that will prevent any possibility of dearth in the future, and doctors, who partially discontinued its use, may now prescribe it as freely as they did before the war, says the London Times. The first of the Dorking plantations was started immediately after the war broke out, but the difficulty of obtaining the seed, and more especially the slow growth of the plant, in the initial stages, prevented the drug being produced in large quantities until this year. Next year a still larger quantity will be placed on the market. Practically the whole of the plantations are on waste ground that could not possibly produce food. If the seed is sown in the open, it takes four years before sufficient herb can be cut to make a paying crop.

Value in Skim Milk.

Skim milk is chiefly casein, and while it is a food rich in protein it was formerly fed to the pigs or thrown away. Chemical research brought out its value in paper sizing, in making water soluble paints for interior use and for many other purposes.

Another use for skim milk consists under a patented process of emulsifying coconut oil and skim milk in water and then stabilizing them so that the product has substantially the same food qualities as milk and cream, and it looks and tastes like milk and cream. The skim milk may be shipped dried, and no cow is needed within ten thousand miles.—From "Chemistry in Overalls," by Arthur D. Little.

A woman's idea of real sport is hunting a new hat.

ONE HAD BEEN OVERLOOKED

Soldier Evidently Had Not Taken a Census of His Wounds Before Applying for Treatment.

In one action a soldier got a machine gun bullet through the arm. As he was walking to the rear, a shell burst near and a couple of pieces of shrapnel struck him. As he was going back in an ambulance a second shell overturned the vehicle and he sustained more hurts. He was still able to be up and about at the dressing station, however, and was patched from mend to end.

"There, now," said the doctor, finishing his seventh bandage. "Is that all?"

"I believe it is," said the soldier, as he ambled off the dressing table.

In about ten minutes he came back. "Say," he said, "here's another one in my shoulder I didn't find until just now."—Stars and Stripes.

Spreading the News.

There was no heat on, and Jack listened to his mother and father talk about it. She said: "I was so cold today there were 'goose lumps' on my arms."

It was the next day when the five-year-old very excitedly told a little friend: "My mother was so cold yesterday that there were duck eggs on her arms."

Retort Courteous.

"There are some ugly features about this place of yours."

"I know it. If you look in the glass yonder, you will see some of them."